

GP's role in Mental Health

The difference between Better Access, Better Outcomes and MAHS



GPs are an essential partner in terms of mental health service provision and are the 'gate keepers' to a range of specialist services. In order to best assist your client, when referring for mental health services via a GP, here is an overview of the different service on offer.

Better Access

Initiated in 2006, Better Access is a **Medicare** rebated service for psychologists, psychiatrists and other mental health service providers.

What clients can get:

Up to **12** sessions (within one calendar year) with a Medicare registered mental health professional

What is involved to get it?

Clients must attend a GP who will complete a mental health Plan form including a K10. This then gets sent along with a referring letter to an approved professional. After six sessions, the client will have to re-attend the GP to complete a Mental Health Review Plan in order to get access to a further 6 sessions.

What does it cost?

Better Access is generally **not free**. Some providers will Bulk Bill those on low incomes or with health care cards. Clients will otherwise have to pay a '**gap fee**' to cover the difference between the service fee and what Medicare provides. This is usually between **\$20—\$40 per session**.

Better Outcomes

A Commonwealth funded initiative to support GP's in the improvement of mental health service provision.

What clients can get:

Up to sessions (within one calendar year) with a psychologist registered with the local division of general practice (GPA South Gippsland)

What is involved to get it?

The process is the same as for Better Access except that a voucher is provided to the patient.

What does it cost?

Better Outcomes is **free**, however **check** with GPA South Gippsland to see if vouchers are still available at the time of referring your client to the GP.

MAHS (More Allied Health Services)

A service initiated for people living in rural areas to increase the connection between GP's and other Allied Health professionals.

What clients can get:

Up to **6 free sessions** per calendar year with a registered MAHS provider. This service is **not** for clients with a primary diagnosis of major mental illness.

What is involved to get it?

Clients will need to see their GP who will complete a referral form and fax it to the relevant service.

What does it cost?

MAHS services are **free**

If you have any queries contact GPA South Gippsland on 5674 0900